

It's a chilling decision

What do you do when your partner suddenly decides he wants to ditch the rosé and instead seek out some summer whites? Christine Austin takes a look at some of the best bottles to have chilled and ready.

HOME life has become a little tricky in the past few weeks. While I have been happy to continue sampling and sipping a wide range of rosé wines, particularly during the really hot weather, my other half has had enough of the pink stuff and is demanding a well-chilled white. He is not particularly bothered about matching the white wine with food. It just needs to be chilled, refreshing and flavourful on its own.

So, in the interests of household harmony, here is a fine selection of whites that taste terrific on their own and can also be enjoyed alongside a range of summer foods.

SAUVIGNON BLANC

Sauvignon Blanc is the ultimate cold shower for the taste buds, and there is a huge range of prices and styles.

■ **Maison Fortant Sauvignon Blanc 2025, France, Sainsbury, £4.85:** I have no idea how Sainsbury's manages to price this wine so low, but it is full of zippy, thirst-quenching citrus flavours and is perfect to keep ready in the fridge ready.

■ **Lionel Gosseume 'Domaine de la Croix des Orbinières Touraine Sauvignon, Loire, France, Majestic £11.50 on a mix-six deal:** From a small estate where owner Lionel is meticulous in cutting back yields and keeping winemaking slow and gentle. This has crunchy apple and pear notes, pink grapefruit and a streak of minerals on the finish.

■ **Lismore Flora Sauvignon Blanc Reserve 2024, Cape South Coast, Waitrose, down from £22 to £19 until 21 July:** Samantha O'Keefe is a Californian lady who pitched up in South Africa and started making wine. O'Keefe makes wines with precision, elegance and balance. This Sauvignon Blanc has layers of yellow fruits, with each element melting into another to give complexity.

ASSYRTIKO

This Greek grape variety is becoming more

and more popular, especially as temperatures rise. Think of it as a Sauvignon Blanc on steroids, with a splash of sea-salty freshness.

■ **2 Banks Assyrtiko and Malagouzia 2025, Peloponnese, Greece, Tesco £9:** The aromatic Malagouzia grape adds an extra dimension to this wine, which is still fresh with citrus flavours and a boost of lychee and watermelon flavours.

■ **Zacharias Assyrtiko 2024, Peloponnese, Greece, Waitrose £13:** Bright and fresh, with citrus and white peach flavours and a streak of minerally crunch. Perfect with grilled sardines.

■ **Skouras Wild Ferment Assyrtiko 2024, Peloponnese, Greece, Majestic £15 on a mix-six deal:** From vineyards at 600 metres altitude, this has apple and citrus flavours with a minerally crunch and an almost salty finish.

ALBARIÑO

With nectarine, citrus and floral notes, Albariño is becoming more popular each year. Originally from Rías Baixas in Galicia, Albariño vines have now expanded across the world, mainly to cool, coastal regions where they do best.

■ **Juanico Albariño 2025, Uruguay, Marks and Spencer £10:** Site selection and cool coastal vineyards give great results. White peach, lime freshness and a crisp finish. Also available from Ocado.

■ **Finest Viñas Del Rey Albariño 2025, Rías Baixas, Spain, Tesco £12:** As part of a general uplift in the appearance of the Tesco wine shelves, the label has changed on this splendid wine, so you may have to look carefully for it, but it is well worth the search. Every time I taste it, the quality shines out of the glass with fresh, citrusy flavours, layered with peach and apricot.

■ **Leftfield Albariño 2024, Gisborne, New Zealand, Tesco £13.50:** From the breezy coastline of New Zealand's stunning North Island, this lively, dry and aromatic version of Albariño has delicious peach and melon flavours.

CHARDONNAY

> 4 July 2026 at 0:00

Does anyone drink Chardonnay anymore? There are far too many people declaring in loud voices at parties that they just can't bear the stuff, but I really don't mind because it leaves more lovely wines for the thinking drinker.

■ **Vasse Felix 'Filius' Chardonnay 2024, Margaret River, Australia, Majestic £14.50 on a mix-six deal:** Western Australia provides perfect growing conditions for Chardonnay, with cool breezes blowing straight off the ocean. Winemaker Virginia Willcock has a wine with clean, pure, uncluttered stone fruit and crisp, minerally freshness.

■ **Simpson's Estate Chardonnay 2025, England, Waitrose £17.50:** Ruth and Charles Simpson used to make wine in France, but they saw the potential of English vineyards, and now, with vineyards on the North Downs in Kent, they produce a delicious, unoaked, still Chardonnay.

■ **Roche de Bellene Cote d'Or Chardonnay, 2022, Ocado down from £29 to £22 until 14 July:** An exceptional wine with soft, rounded melon and orchard fruit flavours.

RIESLING

Riesling is another grape that has faded from fashionable drinking, but there are some terrific, zesty, lime-shot, floral-edged Rieslings around.

■ **Classics No. 2 Riesling 2025, Pfalz, Germany, Marks and Spencer £10:** Made by a former M&S winemaker, it is dry, zesty and full of fresh acidity that literally tingles across the palate with the addition of freshly squeezed lime notes.

■ **Cave de Hunawihr Riesling 2023, Alsace,**

France, Field and Fawcett £15.95: A zesty Riesling with light floral aromas, orchard fruits, citrus and a bite of minerality at the very end.

■ **Wild and Wilder The Courtesan Clare Valley Riesling 2022, Australia, Latitude Wines £15.99:** From a small winery in the Adelaide Hills this crisp, dry Riesling is zesty, fresh and bright, with ripe apple and lemon and lime fruit.

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PUBLICATION: Yorkshire Post

COUNTRY: GBR

TYPE: Print

AVE: £2265.45

REACH: 18534

AUTHOR:

PAGE: 28,29

SURFACE: 42.00 %

> 4 July 2026 at 0:00



**WONDERFUL
WHITES:** Alsace
is full of beauti-
ful villages making
lovely wines, above;
Samantha O'Keefe,
who makes delicious
Sauvignons in South
Africa, having moved
from America, is pic-
tured below.